

Northeastern Oregon students take to the outdoors for science

By ISABELLA CROWLEY
The Observer

LA GRANDE — Local high school students traded their science classroom and textbooks for the great outdoors and waders.

Thirty juniors from La Grande High School boarded buses Wednesday, June 1, for Bird Track Springs Campground, about 14 miles from La Grande, to participate in the Qaqápnim Wéele/Grande Ronde community science project. The students, who were taking environmental science with Brandon Galvez, waded into the watershed for a hands-on learning experience.

“Kids deserve the opportunity to learn outside, and we’re in the perfect place for that,” said Carrie Lowe, community science coordinator contracted through the Grande Ronde Model Watershed.

Lowe said the program encourages students to pursue their scientific interests.

“I want kids to know that no matter what your gifts are, what your passions are, there is a place for you in science,” she said.

Throughout the spring a total of 330 students from Union and surrounding counties took part in the community science project, Lowe said. The project aims to build community-wide awareness about the importance of the watershed by engaging young people in monitoring projects.

A watershed is an area of land that channels rainfall and snowmelt to creeks, streams and rivers before



Students measuring water temperature June 1, 2022, at Bird Track Springs as part of the water quality workstation while attending the Qaqápnim Wéele/Grande Ronde community science project.

Isabella Crowley/The Observer

eventually connecting to outflow points, like reservoirs, bays or an ocean.

Each group visited a different part of the Grande Ronde watershed, where they learned at three workstations: water quality, aquatic macroinvertebrates and riparian vegetation.

While working at the water

quality station, students measured water temperature, pH level, channel width and stream flow.

At the aquatic macroinvertebrates station they collected and sampled the types of invertebrates, such as insects or crayfish, in the water.

In the riparian vegetation zone, students learned about flora along

the riverbank and helped catalog locations while learning which plants have cultural significance to Indigenous peoples. This workstation is done in partnership with the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation.

“We’re learning out in nature,” said Mason Miles, a high school student from La Grande. “We see it

GET INVOLVED

Readers can get involved by emailing communityscience@grmw.org.

in the books, then get the hands-on experience.”

Outreach programs are beneficial for both students and schools. Field trips can be cost-prohibitive for schools, as they need to cover the price of buses and substitute teachers, Galvez said. Programs such as the Grande Ronde community science project get funding specifically to conduct outreach.

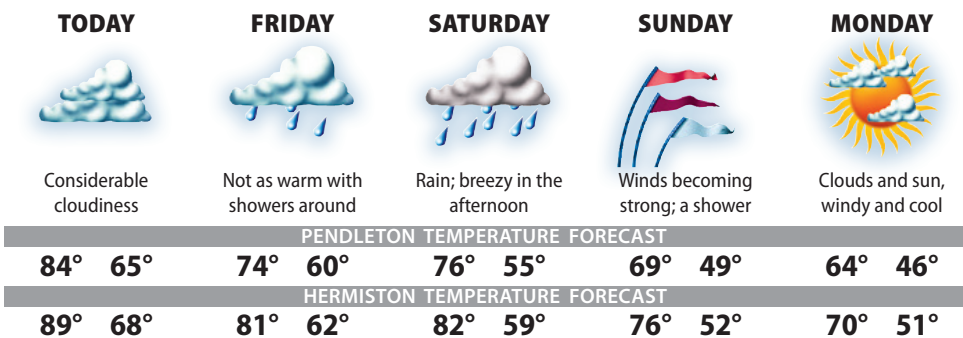
“This is a really nice partnership with the schools and program,” he said.

The community science project is funded entirely through grants and donations. This year it received \$120,000 — \$11,000 from Wildhorse Foundation, \$5,000 from the National Park Service’s Crayfish Study and \$105,000 from Amazon Web Services in collaboration with the Greater Oregon Science, Technology, Engineering and Math Hub — to cover the cost of implementation, supplies, tribal guidance and local participation.

There is sometimes a debate within the scientific community whether to refer to projects like this as citizen science or community science, Lowe said.

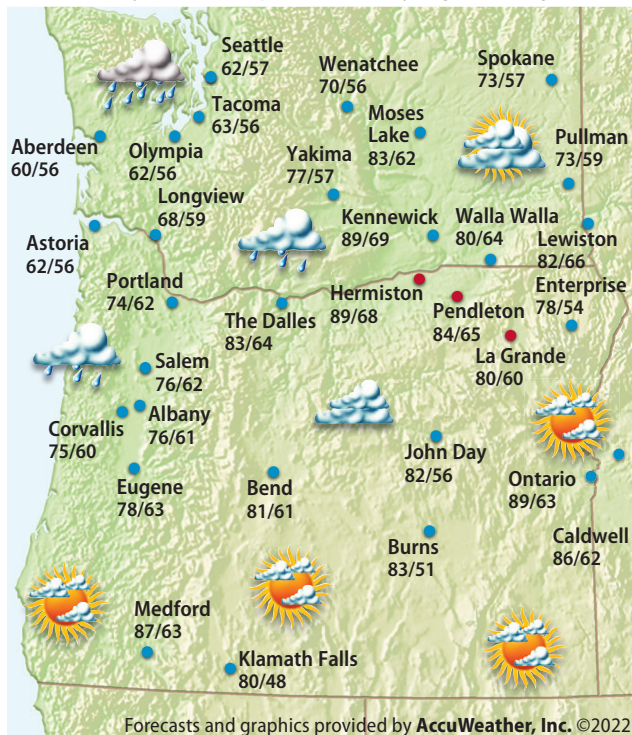
“We use community science because we want the community to know that everyone is welcome,” she said.

Forecast for Pendleton Area



OREGON FORECAST

Shown is today's weather. Temperatures are today's highs and tonight's lows.



ALMANAC

PENDLETON through 3 p.m. yest.

TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	76°	61°
Normals	77°	51°
Records	102° (2015)	35° (1910)

PRECIPITATION
24 hours ending 3 p.m. Trace
Month to date 1.14"
Normal month to date 0.41"
Year to date 9.80"
Last year to date 4.02"
Normal year to date 7.25"

HERMISTON through 3 p.m. yest.

TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	80°	59°
Normals	80°	52°
Records	105° (2015)	40° (1979)

PRECIPITATION
24 hours ending 3 p.m. Trace
Month to date 0.36"
Normal month to date 0.23"
Year to date 6.15"
Last year to date 2.23"
Normal year to date 4.61"

WINDS (in mph)

Today	Fri.
Boardman WSW 7-14	WSW 7-14
Pendleton WNW 6-12	SW 6-12

SUN AND MOON

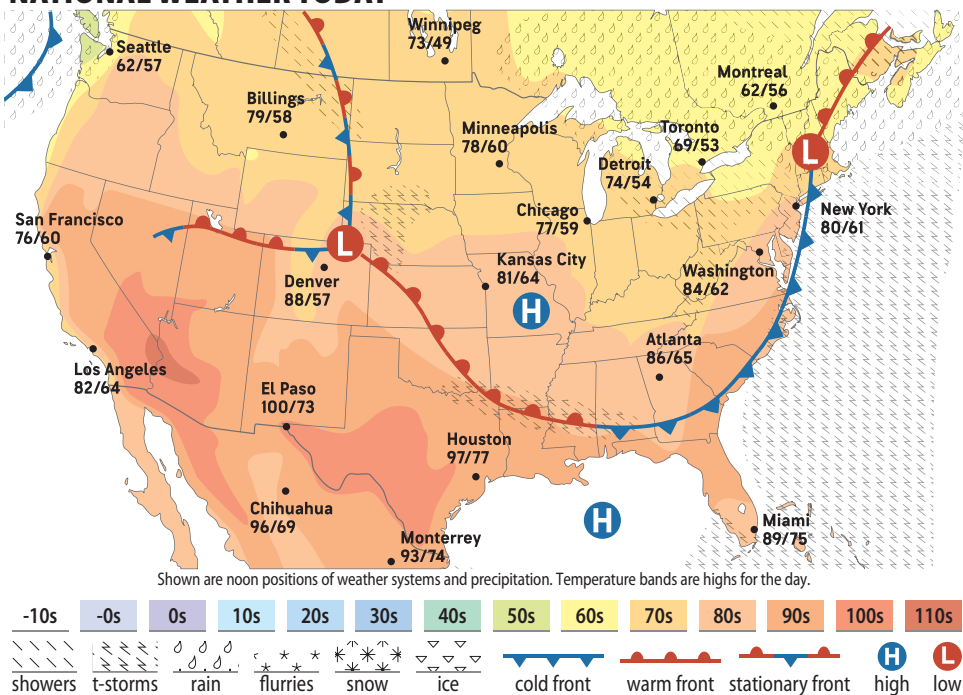
Sunrise today	5:06 a.m.
Sunset tonight	8:43 p.m.
Moonrise today	3:06 p.m.
Moonset today	2:23 a.m.

Full Last New First
June 14 June 20 June 28 July 6

NATIONAL EXTREMES

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)
High 109° in Presidio, Texas Low 28° in Bodie State Park, Calif.

NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



Wallowa students lend helping hand

Students venture out to aid in various projects

By JEFF BUDLONG
Wallowa County Chieftain

WALLOWA — Students in the Wallowa School District have spent the school year learning from a variety of sources, but as it draws to a close they took a different approach — a hands-on approach.

Students began working the morning on Friday, June 3, and spent a couple of hours doing various projects to help the community. One of the projects was planting a garden at the Wallowa River House, an 11-bed residential treatment facility for individuals with severe physical and mental health issues.

“We are planting a garden,” said Brandy Bronson, a fourth grade teacher. “A former resident at the River House passed away and there is an area filled with wildflowers, so we are going to repaint the sign there and clean it up.”

The community garden will be directly behind the space dedicated to former longtime resident Doug Yarger, which will allow for a partnership with the Wallowa

River House. In addition to cleaning up the flowers, students will repaint a sign that says, “Doug’s Garden.”

Students planted a variety of fruits and vegetables that will be monitored and eventually used throughout the summer and fall. Seeds and plants were donated by the Oregon State University Extension Service and a nursery for the project.

“I wanted to see the garden project get up and going, and I am also doing our summer school program,” Bronson said. “Ann Bloom with Extension is going to come down to help us care for the garden, talk about the fruits and vegetables and provide some nutrition lessons.”

The project also allows older students to lead and work with younger ones to make sure tasks are done while taking ownership in the work.

Bronson hopes her next class of fourth graders will harvest the bounty of the garden in the fall. It is a learning lesson from plant to pick, Bronson said. In the future, she would like high school students to build and donate some raised beds that can be used at the garden site on an annual basis.

The garden wasn’t the only

project students took part in. Students also took on cleaning up Evans Park in Wallowa.

Bronson said working on projects is an important way students can give back to the community, but it also strengthens the bond between the community and the school. It often leads to new partnerships and benefits for both sides.

The work being done highlights the theme of community and service that has been the focus of the last month of classes. The theme at the beginning and end of each school year incorporates all the students in the Wallowa School District. Students are broken into family groups and have readings and activities that highlight the theme.

“Family groups consist of a couple of adults and then a cross group of different aged students,” Bronson said. “Our sixth graders usually become the leaders, and we are trying to build a community within our school so the kids are familiarizing themselves with other students from other grades.”

It instills leadership qualities in the older students and you see how some of the younger students who may not be as confident can lean on them, Bronson said.

IN BRIEF

Joseph man hurt, woman dies in motorcycle crash

LA GRANDE — A Wallowa County man was injured and woman killed in a motorcycle crash Sunday, June 5, in Union County.

Robert E. Scott, 50, of Joseph, was traveling eastbound on Highway 82 near milepost 32 when he lost control of his Harley-Davidson motorcycle and crashed, according to a report from the Oregon State Police. The weather, which was rain and fog, is being

investigated as contributing factors, police said.

Scott suffered serious injuries and was transported to an area hospital. A passenger, Linda S. Walker, 52, of Joseph, was transported via Life Flight but suffered fatal injuries and later died.

OSP was assisted at the scene by Union County Sheriff’s Office, Elgin Fire Department, La Grande Fire Department, Life Flight and Oregon Department of Transportation.

— EO Media Group

CORRECTIONS: The East Oregonian works hard to be accurate and sincerely regrets any errors. If you notice a mistake in the paper, please call 541-966-0818.

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